



Root Cellar at Hillsboro NPS Photo

Activity 2 History

Bighorn Canyon Characters Christy Fleming

After the mountain men stopped using the Bad Pass Trail, Settlers began to arrive. All of them came for different reasons.

Henry Clay Lovell was drawn to the area in 1883 by the open range which was well suited for cattle grazing. Anthony L. Mason, a Kansas City, Missouri capitalist, was Lovell's financial backer. Their ranch soon became known as the ML Ranch. During the heyday of the open range, the ML Ranch ran cattle as far south as Thermopolis, Wyoming and as far north as the Crow Reservation in Montana. The harsh winter of 1886-87 cut their herd in half. After Mason's death in 1892, Lovell continued to ranch until his death in 1903.

In 1896, Erastus T. Ewing brought his family and his partners to Bighorn Canyon in search of gold. While some gold was found, it was not in paying quantities. Ewing's partners left, but the Ewing family stayed. They settled

at what is now the Ewing/Snell Ranch and began ranching. After changing hands a couple times Philip and Alma Snell purchased the ranch in 1920. The ranch is named after Erastus Ewing, the man that established it and the Snells, the family that lived there the longest.

Grosvener W. Barry, like Erastus, was drawn to the canyon by gold in 1903. After starting three different gold mining companies, he found that he was not going to extract a fortune in gold from the Bighorn Canyon placer deposits. Being a promoter at heart, Barry and his family turned to dude ranching. He advertised his Cedarvale Ranch as a sportsman's paradise. Guest could stay all summer if they wanted. In 1915, a post office was established and put the Cedarvale Ranch on the map as Hillsboro, Montana. Grosvener W. Barry is credited as being the first person to

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recognize and exploit the recreational opportunities of Bighorn Canyon.

Caroline Lockhart came later. In 1926 she purchased 160 acres on the Dryhead and began to pursue her goal of becoming the Cattle Queen of Montana. By this time in her life she had already been a newspaper correspondent for the Boston Post, the Philadelphia Bulletin, and the Denver Post. She had also published six novels and was hoping the quiet pace of ranch life would allow her time to write more. She found that ranching was hard work and didn't leave much time for writing. She was able to complete one last novel while on the ranch.



Employee carves notch replicating the craftsmanship of the original builder.
NPS Photo



Montana Conservation Corps dump buckets of dirt for a new sod roof on the shop at Lockhart.
NPS Photo

Taking Care of the Past By Christy Fleming

Bighorn Canyon has four historic ranches. They are each different, but have several similarities. Each represents life on a western ranch beginning with the Mason/Lovell Ranch in 1883 up to 1965. Each is remote, dependant on their own resources for survival.

Now abandoned by their previous tenants, these ranches are an important part of the Bighorn Canyon story. Today the ranches are used to tell people about a way of life.

Over the years the logs in the buildings shrink or rot, sod roofs start to decay, and buildings start to lean. To be able to continue to enjoy the ranches as part of the park history, we need to maintain them. Over the last several years the Cultural Team of the Resource Management Division have been restoring the buildings a little at a time. Their work is very important, but time consuming. Before they lift one finger to begin the hard work ahead, they must research, record, and document the buildings. All of their work must be approved by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Their goal is to preserve the buildings integrity and replicate the original craftsmanship. Often times the original carpenters, being a long way from town, had to make due with what they had and sometimes they couldn't use the best building practices.

After the documentation is finished, the cultural team begins to work on the building. First the building is stabilized so that it won't cave in or become a safety hazard. Next they take the dirt off the sod roof. They record the placement of

When three loads of Lockhart steers topped the market in Omaha in 1953, Caroline must have indeed felt she was the "Cattle Queen". She controlled over 7,000 acres when she sold the ranch in 1955.

These are just a few of the characters that make up the Bighorn Canyon story. There were cattle rustlers, miners, farmers, and people just passing through. You can learn a lot about the history of an area by looking at the life stories of the people that lived there.

the logs and remove rotten timbers. Using turn buckles they then straighten the building if it is needed. Next they look at sill logs, the logs at the bottom of the building. Generally these are the first to rot as they rest close to the ground. To replace them the entire cabin must be jacked up. The lowest logs that need replacing are done first working up from the bottom log. Again the goal is to replicate the craftsmanship of the original builder. New logs are peeled and worked with hand tools to look as close to the original log as possible. It is then put into place. After the logs are replaced, the building is put back into place and the roof is addressed. New roof logs are set with a moisture barrier over top. Then the dirt that was taken off is put back on. An erosion fabric laid over the dirt to keep it in place until the seeds planted on the roof sprout. Establishing a root system is the key to maintaining the sod roof. Lastly doors frames are straightened, windows are replaced, and chinking is applied.

Some buildings need to be totally worked over, while some just need a pane of glass here or a new log there. The point of all of this is to maintain the buildings so that their stories will continue to be told.

Ranches of the Past



Social Studies, Speaking and Listening

Standards: Wyoming Social Studies: Standard 4, Benchmark 1 & 3
Montana Speaking and Listening: Standard 2, Benchmark 1, 2, & 3

Duration: On Site
1 day, tour all four historic ranches

Off Site
1 to 2 hour lesson, Read articles or rely on notes taken during the field trip to compare the similarities of the ranches.

Class Size: Any

Objectives

After learning about the historic ranches located at Bighorn Canyon, students will:

1. Identify similarities between the four historic ranches.
2. Have an idea of how life was like on the ranch.
3. Be able to discuss the purpose of the buildings on the ranches and compare that to their own homes.

Vocabulary

Irrigation: used to supply dry land with water by means of ditches, pipes, or streams.

Sill Logs: are the horizontal logs that rest on the foundation and forms the base of a wall.

Chinking: is the material used to fill a long, narrow crack or gap between logs, often consisting of clay mixed with other materials including sand, lime, stones, and hair.

Daub: is the rough mortar, clay, or plaster smeared on a surface; used for chinking.

Setting the Stage

Bighorn Canyon has four historic ranches. They were all established at different times and with different purposes in mind, but they have many similarities. These similarities can help us to understand what it was like to live during that time. What are some of the similarities and what does that tell us about life in the Bighorn Canyon area from 1883 to 1965?

Procedure

On Site

1. Explore each of the historic ranches.
2. Record information about each of the buildings.
3. Observe the way the buildings have been built and are being restored.

Off Site

1. Read about each of the four ranches.
2. Take notes on the differences and similarities.
3. Discuss, using notes taken at the ranch, what life must have been like.

Additional Activities

Volunteer to help with restoration projects at an area near you, (chinking and daubing, peeling logs, replacing sod roofs, etc. . .).

Letters to the Past



Language Arts, Reading, Speaking and Listening, Writing

Standards:	Wyoming Language Arts: Standard 1, Benchmark III – A,B,C,D,E, Standard 2, Benchmark I – A,C,D,E,F,G, Standard 2, Benchmark II – A,B, Standard 3, Benchmark 1 & 2 Montana Reading: Standard 4, Benchmark 7 Montana Speaking and Listening: Standard 2, Benchmark 1, 2, & 3 Standard 3, Benchmark 1,2, & 3 Montana Writing: Standard 1, Benchmark 1, 2, 3, & 4 Standard 4, Benchmark 1 & 2
Duration:	Time for research and presentations
Class Size:	Any

Objectives

Students will learn research techniques and the proper letter writing format.

Setting the Stage

Local students will write a letter to one of the historic characters of Bighorn Canyon. Students from farther away will choose characters that were important to their areas history.

Procedure

1. Students will be able to choose from a list of Bighorn Canyon Historic Characters
 - a. Caroline Lockhart
 - b. Anthony Mason
 - c. Henry Clay Lovell
 - d. Robert Yellowtail
 - e. Erastus Ewing
 - f. Doc Barry
 - g. Link Hannon
 - h. Eddy Hulbert
 - i. Frank Sykes
2. Students will be given a week to research their character using at least two sources. One may be the short essays under History on the teacher supplement disc.
3. Students will then be asked to write a letter to their character
4. Students will present to the class a short history of their character and why they were an important part of the history of Bighorn Canyon
5. Students will then read their letter to the class.

Additional Activity

For local students, Students will be guided through the historic ranches. If the character they researched was part of the ranch history, the student may choose to help during the Ranger Lead Program during the field trip.

For students that are unable to come to Bighorn Canyon, they may be able to visit the home of their character either in person or on the internet.